

Jordan Times

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جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة تصدر عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية «الرأي»

Mubarak: PLO must act

CAIRO (R) — President Hosni Mubarak urged Palestinians Tuesday to work closely with Jordan for peace in the Middle East and said the ball was now in their court. "The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) will have to coordinate with Jordan towards peace," Mubarak said in remarks reported by the national Middle East News Agency (MENA). He said Jordan's decision to sever legal and administrative links with the West Bank complied with a PLO demand. "The cause is now in their hands. They are the sole legitimate representatives of the Palestinians and we can only tell them: Do your best for the cause," Mubarak said. He could not tell whether Jordan's decision was a setback for the U.S. peace initiative proposed by Secretary of State George Shultz earlier this year. "We cannot judge yet. King Hussein has openly declared he is committed to take part in the peace march," he said after a meeting with top aides. In a reference to Cairo's support for a Palestinian government-in-exile, Mubarak said: "We suggested it in the past and they (the Palestinians) did not accept it. Now they are wavering, at times saying they will form one, at others saying a government will not be useful."

Iraqis celebrate ceasefire; Iran orders immediate halt to fighting

U.N. forms Gulf truce force amid world euphoria

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The Security Council unanimously approved Tuesday the establishment of a new U.N. peace-keeping force to monitor the ceasefire between Iran and Iraq that goes into force Aug. 20 as the world heaped praises on the world body for securing a truce in one of the most vicious wars in modern history.

UNIMOG is initially being deployed for six months, at a cost of an estimated \$74 million to the United Nations which is already in a deep financial crisis due to the failure of some members — including the United States — to

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Al Hussein congratulates Iraq

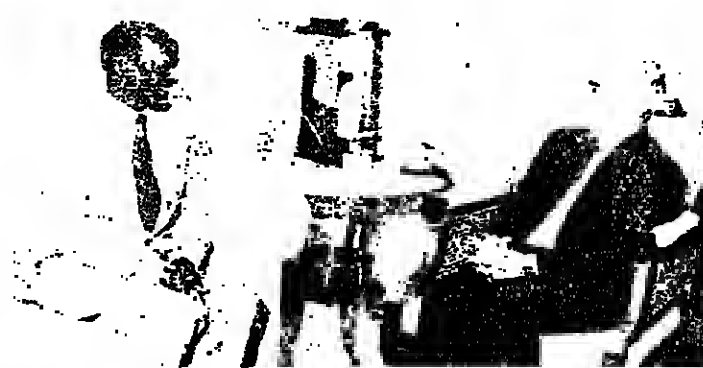
AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday congratulated Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, the armed forces and the people of Iraq for successfully defending the eastern borders of the Arab World.

In a statement to Baghdad Television Tuesday night King Hussein expressed hope that this will be the end to the eight-year-old Gulf war.

Al Hussein receives Somali message

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday received at Al Nadwa Palace Somali Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mohammad Ali Hamed, who conveyed to His Majesty a message from Somali President Siyad Barre. The message dealt with means to boost bilateral relations and exchange of views about current Arab issues.

In a statement he made to a Petra correspondent upon



His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday receives Somali Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mohammad Ali Hamed (Petra photo)

arrival, the Somali official wished the Jordanian people further progress and prosperity under King Hussein's leadership. He also conveyed congratulations to the King and the Jordanian people on the occasion of the anniversary of His Majesty's accession to the throne.

U.S. envoy says American policy unchanged

King, Murphy hold talks on Mideast, Gulf developments

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein and U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy Tuesday discussed the latest developments in the Middle East, the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Iran-Iraq war.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said Murphy also briefed the King on talks he held with his Soviet counterpart Vladimir Polyakov in Geneva last week which centred on a number of international issues among which the Middle East conflict and efforts for peace in the region figured high.

The King and Murphy also reviewed developments in the Iran-Iraq war and ways of reaching a just solution to the conflict as well as the Afghan situation, Petra said.

Murphy also briefed Prime Minister Zaid Rifai on his talks with Polyakov.

Petra did not elaborate.

In a statement he made to

reporters upon departure, Murphy said the U.S. remained committed to seeking Arab-Israeli peace.

"I want to thank His Majesty King Hussein for receiving me and for the very important exchange we had on regional issues and the peace process," Murphy

said.

The U.S. envoy said he was "particularly interested to hear His Majesty's assessment of Jordan's policy in the region and in the Arab-Israeli arena."

"His Majesty affirmed Jordan's

(Continued on page 2)

No elections until legislation amended

AMMAN (J.T.) — Interior Minister Rajai Dajani was quoted Tuesday as saying parliamentary elections would not be held unless the 1986 Election Law has been amended.

The Al Ra'i Arabic daily quoted Dajani as saying that a specialised committee would study an amendment to the law in harmony with the recent Jordanian decision to sever legal and administrative links with the Israeli-occupied West Bank. The government will reconsider its earlier decision to form constituencies in the Palestinian refugee camps in the East Bank following the decision, Dajani said.

He said the specialised committee would meet soon to work out an outline for the amendment.

Since the unity between the two banks of Jordan in 1950, the Lower House of Parliament seated equal number of deputies from both banks, but any election from now on will obviously include citizens in the East Bank.

S. Africa starts Angola pullout today

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South Africa's frontline troops mopped up the wreckage of yesterday's battle as they prepared to withdraw from southern Angola across 300 kilometres of sandy bush to South African-ruled Namibia.

Officials at South Africa's main Namibian garrison of Oshakati said their forces in Angola — estimated at more than 2,000 — were already dismantling their main forward base near Cuito Cuanavale.

Under a ceasefire plan announced Monday, the withdrawal will start Wednesday and be completed by Sept. 1.

Officials in Oshakati said troops were "collecting garbage and picking up bits of wrecked tanks and blasted trucks. They are almost ready to move."

Cuito Cuanavale, once a key government garrison 300 kilometres inside Angola, faced eight months of bombardment by South Africa's long-range G-5 guns and became a symbol of Angolan resistance.

Several times the town was reported to be on the verge of capture but Angolan and Cuban forces vowed they would never allow it to fall into South African hands.

In Pretoria, a senior Defence

Ministry official said troops would be moving south Wednesday but indicated it could be a slow operation assuring cover for the pullback.

"It is not like a rugby game where the whistle goes and everybody just packs up and goes home," he said. "There is a ceasefire, but one knows what the record of ceasefires is."

The withdrawal is part of an accord, including an undisclosed provision for monitoring, thrashed out in Geneva last week by South Africa, Angola and Cuba.

It could be the first step to-

wards Namibian independence after 70 years of South African rule and to peace in southwestern Africa after more than 21 years of guerrilla war and civil conflict.

At times, South Africa penetrated more than 1,000 kilometres to the outskirts of the Angolan capital, Luanda, in over a decade of conflict with guerrillas of the Angolan-backed South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) fighting for Namibian independence.

Pretoria also provided support for Jonas Savimbi's pro-Western UNITA rebels fighting the Angolan government.

Forgive the eternal sufferers

By Salameh B. Ne'matt

AMMAN — Al Ra'i's home news columnist Fakhri Kavar made a subtle apology to his readers and the readers of all Jordanian newspapers when he said the following: "Those in charge of our newspapers should be forgiven if they banned an opinion from being published, and the writer should be excused if he failed to convey his opinion to his readers, because the basic trouble in our profession is the press and publications law."

Delivering a lecture at the Al-Ahli Club Monday, Kavar said the press and publications law "can halt a newspaper's publication without giving it the right to self-defence before specialised courts."

He said that the press, "sometimes called her majesty, or the fourth estate, is in reality a means of publication, governed by the views of the executive branch."

When a writer criticises a certain government institution, Kavar told the audience, "he is faced with severe difficulties in convincing the official in charge of this institution of the wrongs committed by his subordinates."

The columnist believes that officials behave in this way because "they feel they own property that must not be touched or even looked at."

He said the reason behind this attitude is "the absence of the official's will to improve and become better in performance because he is convinced that he reached his responsible position because he is

the only knowledgeable one — someone who cannot be challenged."

He said an absence of a sincere feeling of loyalty to the country contributed to some officials' unwillingness to interact with both supportive and opposing opinions. "It stops him from seeing the reality as it is. On the one hand we are living in a tribal society, and on the other hand in a patriarchal setting. We do not accept democracy and popular participation, opinion and the opposite view."

In his review of the relationship between newspapers and the public, Kavar declared that the press should be in favour of progress and development, and thus, "the press which raises the banner of 'objectivity' is in reality an impartial press that does not stand by the citizens and does not defend the cause of the masses."

He described objectivity in the press as a "negative impartiality" that hurts public interest.

The press, he believes, "must push public opinion in the right direction, in line with the needs of the society, contemporary life and modern civilisation."

This, he concluded requires "bias" in favour of the masses, because such a bias is the needed "objectivity." He contended that a liberal and impartial press cannot achieve the goal of helping society, achieve progress.

In Kavar's view, the relationship between readers and writers is directly affected by what writers publish, and to what extent it corresponds with their



Fakhri Kavar

views and expectations. He pointed out, however, that readers are often not aware of the limitations governing the work of a writer or journalist. "They do not know what goes on in the newspaper's kitchen and corridors. They are not fully aware of the writer's troubles or the series of problems involved in the press profession."

A writer in a newspaper has often one of two missions: He is either dealing with political developments on the local, Arab and international levels or concerned with different local topics that do not carry a political connotation. In both cases, the writer has to deliver his article on time so that he does not breach his agreement with the press institution or his indirect agreement with the readers.

"We can imagine how easy it is for people to read the newspaper while having their morning coffee, rushing through the news and commentaries without serious consideration of the effort involved."

Speaking of the plight of writers, Kavar said: "The writer spends his day thinking of something to write for the next day. He discusses his story, turns it around several times until the evening, when he is surprised by a more pressing issue or something more important than what he thought of all day. He starts thinking again of the new story, to put it in the proper context of style and within the mould that makes it acceptable to this readers."

He said the columnist sometimes works hard on an article only to discover that the editor stopping it for no reason other than it having "crossed the red line."

He said there were many issues, political and intellectual that were banned from discussion in the press although very much demanded by readers.

"The reader is not aware of this. He tends to believe that the writer does not have the courage, the knowledge or the moral disposition to tackle these issues."

He continued: "The problems facing writers are just like problems facing all citizens. They are endless. Journalistic writing will remain an exhausting profession that kills its practitioner slowly but surely. It turns him bit by bit... He dies every day, wakes up to die anew... it is the continuous eternal suffering."

QUEEN NOOR HONOURS AIDES:

Her Majesty Queen Noor, the president of the Higher National Committee for the Jerash Festival, Tuesday honoured the representatives of institutions and departments which contributed to the success of the seventh Jerash Festival of Culture and Arts. Queen Noor presented festival shields, presents and prizes to the representatives in addition to the winners in the photographic exhibition. The festival director delivered a speech praising their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor's patronage of the festival. He also expressed gratitude to all the institutions and departments which contributed to the success of the festival.



King, Murphy discuss Mideast, Gulf developments

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continuing commitment to comprehensive peace through negotiations... in turn, I assured His Majesty that the commitment of the United States to assist and promote these efforts is firm."

Murphy outlined the U.S. position that it would continue to work with Jordan, as a party involved in the conflict, on ways to reach a durable and just settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"We are going to continue to work with Jordan and other Arab states to try to advance through negotiations to a comprehensive peace settlement," the U.S. official said.

Murphy, who arrived in Amman on a fourth leg of a regional tour which has taken him to Lebanon, Syria and Israel, praised Jordan's "qualities required to launch negotiations... creativity, adherence to universally accepted principles and determination."

He said these qualities were "to be emulated, particularly at this important juncture in the search for a comprehensive settlement."

The U.S. envoy told reporters

that "peace never happens by chance... it results from a process of accommodation, reconciliation and the mutual satisfaction of political rights."

Asked by the Jordan Times whether the U.S. was willing to deal with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as the representative of the Palestinian people, Murphy said: "If you go back to 1975 agreement, the conditions are set out in that agreement for negotiations with the PLO, and the PLO has not yet met those conditions."

Murphy was referring to an American undertaking to Israel initiated by then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in 1975 that the U.S. would not deal with the PLO until and unless the organisation recognises Israel's "right to exist" and renounces "terrorism."

Murphy declined to comment on Jordan's decision to break legal and administrative ties with the Israeli occupied West Bank.

But he said that during his talks with the King, there was no indication that Jordan had lost interest in seeking Middle East peace.

The U.S. envoy dismissed the

proposal for setting up a Palestinian government-in-exile saying it was "just too hypothetical for me to answer... as far as I know there is no decision to form a government-in-exile."

He added: "Questions which face getting into a peace settlement in this region are going to require negotiations... things are not going to be settled outside the negotiations arena."

Murphy stressed that U.S. policy towards the Middle East would not be changed. "We do not support a Palestinian state, nor continued occupation by Israel," he said.

Murphy warned that while the peacemaking arena was large enough to accommodate all those who aspire to participate actively, "there are no free rides."

"Every party needs to accept the internationally recognised basis for conducting negotiations; Resolutions 242 and 338," he said.

Murphy added that every party also needs to renounce violence and terrorism and "accept the universally-recognised formula for a settlement, namely land for peace."

Murphy left Amman for Cairo

where he is scheduled to hold talks with Egyptian officials on the Middle East peace prospects.

Asked whether he was going to meet any Palestinian personalities during his two-day stay there, Murphy said: "I have not heard whether anything was scheduled in Cairo or not."

He added: "I look forward, if the Palestinian side was able to get together with me, to that meeting."

A Palestinian leader was quoted as saying in a Reuters dispatch from Jerusalem that efforts for a meeting in Cairo between Murphy and a Palestinian delegation had failed through.

"Everything has stopped now... I hope there will be another meeting in future," said Kanaan, a member of the Palestine National Council (PNC) from Nablus, said.

Kanaan was regarded as a possible member of a team to meet Murphy Wednesday.

Kanaan said efforts broke down over a demand by the PLO for a bigger delegation and another that delegates be acknowledged as representing the PLO.

Jordan receives 2 water tanker trucks from S. Korea

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Agriculture Tuesday received two water tanker trucks as a gift from the government of South Korea to help carry out Jordan's afforestation projects.

The South Korean Ambassador Tae Jin Park presented the trucks to the director of the ministry's Range and Afforestation Department, who deputised Marwan Hmoud as minister of agriculture.

The department director, in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the ministry began planting trees along 400 kilometres of the Desert Highway and watering the saplings on a regular basis in a bid to stop the encroachment of deserts on arable land.

He said the project, which will later be extended to include all highways in the Kingdom, requires the appropriation of 12 water tanker trucks, which the government of Korea has ex-



Officials examine water tankers given to Jordan by South Korea in an attempt to aid Jordanian afforestation projects (Petra photo)

pressed readiness to provide along with agricultural equipment.

The director expressed Jordan's appreciation to South Korea for the gift and said Jordan

hoped for continued bilateral cooperation in agricultural and technical fields.

U.N. forms Gulf truce force amid world euphoria

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pay their dues.

The expenses of the new observer group will be assessed against all U.N. members.

Iran ordered its troops to hold their fire Tuesday ahead of the Aug. 20 ceasefire which was welcomed with relief but little joy.

Military chief Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, quoted by Tehran Radio, told his forces to start no military action after the U.N. announcement Monday.

But he warned troops to be prepared for further "aggression" in the war, which has claimed more than one million casualties since it broke out in September 1980.

Awareness of the war's toll weighed heavily on Tehran Tuesday.

"How can we celebrate when we have lost more than half a million dead?" asked one middle-aged businessman, whose son was on the central front.

"Yes, we are happy the war ends, but so many people have lost those they loved."

"Iran is very angry — boys have been killed. The ceasefire is good, but..." said a sales assistant from a clothing shop in Tehran's main Valiasr Street.

Pictures of those killed at the front hung in Tehran's streets.

Joyous Iraqis poured out the streets of Baghdad in their hundreds of thousands to dance and

cheer. President Hussein, the man the Iranians had fought to overthrow, declared a three-day national holiday "so that victorious Iraqis can celebrate the glory."

The differing moods in the two states underlined lingering doubts that permanent peace could be established.

Meanwhile, words of praise and offers of help cascaded Tuesday on the United Nations and Iran and Iraq following the announcement of a target date to halt nearly eight years of carnage.

Many countries offered to participate in U.N. observer forces and reconstruction efforts, and insurance companies lowered rates for ships that ply the Gulf.

While no one said Monday's announcement of a ceasefire and peace negotiations, later this month would ensure lasting peace... some countries said the truce should allow foreign navies to leave the Gulf.

Mostly, though, world leaders bailed the end of one of modern history's most vicious wars.

U.S. President Ronald Reagan called the announcement "an affirmation of a policy of strength and commitment."

"Our forces in the Persian Gulf and those of our allies have demonstrated that we have the resolve and the staying power in the Gulf as well as in the Security Council when it comes to serving peace," Reagan said Monday.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 73111-19

PROGRAMME ONE

16:00 Koran
16:25 Children's programmes
17:10 Small wonder
17:35 News summary in Arabic
18:00 Message from Cairo
18:15 Local news
19:10 Local programme
19:45 Programme review
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Arabic series
21:50 Local programme
22:30 Wrestling
23:00 News summary in Arabic
23:10 Wrestling (cont.)

PROGRAMME TWO

18:10 La France a la carte
18:30 Rue Carnot
19:00 News in French
19:15 Un DB de plus
19:30 News in Hebrew
19:45 Olympic sports
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Three Up, Two Down
21:00 Space on Earth
21:40 Twilight Zone
22:00 News in English
22:30 Always Afternoon

RADIO JORDAN

85- KHz. AM & 99 MHz. FM
Tel: 73111-19

07:00 Light Music
07:30 Newsdesk
08:00 Morning Show
08:30 News Summary
09:00 Morning Show Cont.
11:00 30 Minute Theatre
11:30 Songs from Movies
12:00 World News Summary
12:45 Readings
13:00 Pop Session
13:30 News Summary
14:00 News Bulletin
14:10 Instrumentals
14:30 The Young Sound
14:50 Concert Hour
15:00 News in Summary
15:30 Instrumentals
15:45 Old Favourites
16:00 Jordan Weekly
17:30 Pop Session
18:00 News Summary
18:30 Science Report
19:30 Music

WORLDNET

(At the American Cultural Centre)

08:00 America Today
11:00 Newsline
12:00 America Today
13:00 Jazz at the Smithsonian
14:30 American Business English
14:45 Science World
15:00 Worldnet Dialogue: U.S. Policy toward ASEAN and Indonesia
16:00 Worldnet Dialogue: Third World
17:00 Growing a Business
17:30 Growing a Business (French)

BBC WORLD SERVICE

639, 720, 1323 KHz

07:00 Newsdesk 07:30 Country Series
07:45 Reflections 07:50 Financial News
08:00 World News 08:09 24 Hours
News Summary 08:30 Report on Religion
08:45 The World Today 09:00
World News 11:09 Reflections 11:15
Classical Record Review 11:30 Brain of Britain 11:30 World News
12:09 British Press Review 12:15 The World Today 12:30 Sports Roundup 12:45
Jazz Scene UK 13:00 News Summary
13:30 Omnibus 13:30 Trivia Test
14:00 World News 14:09 World News
about Britain 14:15 Country Series
14:30 Meridian 15:00 World News
15:15 Time for Verse 15:25 The Farming World 15:45 Sports Roundup 16:00
World News 16:09 Twenty-Four
Hours: News Summary 16:30 Develop-
ment 16:35 Outlook, opening with
5-Minute News 17:05 Report on Religion
17:30 The World Today 18:00 World
News 18:09 Twenty-Four Hours:
Three Wishes 18:30 Radio Active
19:00 World News 19:09 News about
Britain 19:15 Hitting the High Notes
19:45 The World Today 20:00 World
News 20:09 Twenty-Four Hours:
Today 20:30 News Ideas 20:40 Book
Choice 20:45 Sports Roundup 21:00

VOICE OF AMERICA

MW 1260 & SW 7200, 9965, 11740, 11925 and 15210 Hz

07:00 News 07:15 Newsline 07:30 VOA
Morning 08:00 News 08:10 Newsline
08:30 VOA Morning 09:00 News 09:10
Newsline 09:30 VOA Morning 10:00
News 10:10 Newsline 10:30 VOA
Morning 10:40 News 10:50 Newsline
11:00 News 11:10 Newsline 11:30
VOA News 11:40 Newsline 12:00
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Jordanian donates land to NHF

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Jordanian landowner has made a donation of a plot of land to the National Housing Fund (NHF) at Sweimeh near the Dead Sea to help it carry out projects for the benefit of the local community.

A NHF spokesman said that Hamdi Al Anis, one of the major landowners in the Jordan Valley region, presented the NHF with a 500-hectare plot of land located on the northern coast of the Dead Sea. The donation was made in a letter Anis sent to Her Majesty Queen Noor, who is the NHF president, voicing his appreciation of her efforts to promote Jordanian development in general, and her interest in the Jordan Valley region in particular.

The Queen had earlier entrusted the Princess Rahma Development Centre, at Allan, to conduct a social and economic study on the region of Sweimeh, prior to implementing NHF rural development projects there.

A study conducted by the centre outlined measures that could be taken to achieve comprehensive development of land and society in cooperation with concerned government departments.

The Queen herself visited the Jordan Valley and Sweimeh areas last January where she took part in a cleanliness campaign by scouts and school children in areas frequented by vacationers, and called at Sweimeh village where she met with local residents and inspected their living conditions.

The Queen also visited the Dead Sea and studied its touristic potential and services that could be introduced for the benefit of tourists and vacationers.

Two committees were later formed upon the Queen's directives to report on measures that should be taken to improve conditions in the Jordan Valley region.

One of the committees submitted proposals on means to deal with pests, the proper use of fertilisers and the disposal of plastic products and sheets after being used for agricultural purposes.

The second committee provided recommendations on promoting tourist facilities and creating public parks for vacationers with essential sanitary services and other facilities.

Last Sunday, Prime Minister Zaid Rifai requested that the Health Ministry organise regular campaigns for spraying pesticides and insecticides in the Jordan Valley to safeguard public health in that region.

Health Ministry officials said that spraying campaigns will shortly be organised in the region.

At least three ministries and two concerned departments were reported involved in measures to ensure public safety in the Jordan Valley.

Officials said that the Health, Agriculture and Municipal and Rural Affairs Ministries, assisted by the Jordan Valley Authority and the Balqa governor's office, were carrying a campaign to eliminate flies, mosquitoes and other insects that infest the region and endanger public health and crops.

Jordan to take part in electric systems talks

AMMAN (Petra) — A national committee was formed Tuesday to represent Jordan at an international electric systems conference to be held in Paris.

The committee, to be chaired by Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Hisham Al Khatib,



Information Minister Hani Khasawneh meets a delegation comprising American high school students and teachers in Amman Tuesday (Petra photo)

Khasawneh briefs U.S. students, teachers on Middle East situation

AMMAN (Petra) — Information Minister Hani Khasawneh met in his office Tuesday with a delegation representing American high school students and their teachers who crossed into the East Bank from the occupied Arab territories Monday evening.

The minister briefed the visitors on the situation in the Middle East in general, and the recent Jordanian decisions in regards to the West Bank in particular.

The 25-member delegation heard the minister outline the various developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict, the historic links between the Hashemite leadership and Palestine, and Jordan's endeavours to seek peace based on justice.

The recent Jordanian decision to sever legal and administrative ties with the West Bank, Khasawneh noted, was part of Jordan's continued efforts to serve the

Palestinian cause and project the Palestinian identity. It is also to help the Palestinians in their endeavours to regain their rights and their homeland.

The minister briefed the visitors on development projects in Jordan and answered questions about various issues concerning the Middle East.

The delegation, sent on a tour of the region by the Washington-based Arab Women's Council (AWC) told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, upon arrival here that they met with His Majesty King Hussein's decision, which

came in response to the desires of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

The delegation deplored Israel's measures against the Palestinian people as violating human rights and international principles.

Delegation members also voiced their criticism of the U.S. administration for its biased attitude, and called for an immediate end to Israel's occupation of Arab territories and the recognition of the Palestinian people's rights in their homeland as the only way to achieve peace in the Middle East, Petra said.

IRAQI COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS: The Iraqi community in Jordan Tuesday held a massive rally at the Iraqi embassy in Amman expressing profound delight on Iraq's great victory day. People danced and delivered speeches expressing support and appreciation to President Saddam Hussein. The Iraqi community also cabled congratulations to the Iraqi president.

American expert to advise bank on low budget housing

AMMAN (USIA) — Trent Harrington who will serve as an adviser to the Low Cost Housing Department of the Housing Bank throughout the coming year arrived in Amman last week.

A developer himself with 20 years of housing experience in the U.S., Harrington will help the Housing Bank appraise low cost housing projects for the Urban Development Department, and expand its dialogue with private housing developers.

In addition, Harrington will assist the Housing Bank in implementing action plans developed at its "low cost housing seminar" this past May.

Initial meetings of seminar participants who want to form an Association for Private Sector Housing Developers recently have been held with assistance from the Housing Bank. A bound report of the proceedings of the "low cost housing seminar" which was attended by some 50

private developers is now available from the Low Cost Housing Department at the Housing Bank.

The United States Agency International Development (USAID), which is sponsoring Harrington's work, further continues to support private sector activity in the low cost housing market through the design of a new \$50 million housing guaranty loan.

New ministry department to advise citizens on water-related affairs

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Water and Irrigation has created a new department which is called the Department of Public Relations and Citizens Affairs, and said that its staff will be concerned with orienting people on the ministry's activities and programmes in water-related affairs.

The department's Director Bishara Al Naber said the staff will receive and deal with public

complaints by following up matters with the concerned authorities.

"Matters related to sewerage, and the development of the Jordan Valley regions, as well as water issues will be among the various subjects of concern to the new department," Naber said.

He said that the department will issue posters and pamphlets guiding members of the public on ways to ration water at home, and in farms.

The new department he said will coordinate its work with the Water Authority of Jordan and the Jordan Valley Authority.

NATIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

ROYAL DECREE: A Royal Decree was issued Tuesday appointing Shihabuddin Madi ambassador at the Foreign Ministry as of Aug. 1, 1988.

13 STORES CLOSED: The Karak governor Tuesday ordered the closure of 13 stores in the city because their owners had violated public health safety regulations. The governor said that search campaigns will continue to ensure that all stores abide by regulations.

QASER HOUSING COMPLEX: Al Qaser municipality in the Karak Governorate Tuesday took over a newly finished housing complex government departments. The cost of the complex was estimated at JD 167,000.

NEW STAMPS: The General Corporation of Post Offices and Postal Savings Fund has put into circulation new sets of stamps to mark the Kingdom's celebration of His Majesty King Hussein's accession to the throne which falls on Thursday, Aug. 11. The new sets are of 60, 80, 160 and 300 fils denominations.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS: The district governor of Ajloun has formed four committees to take charge of the municipal elections which will be held in Ibbin on Saturday. A total of 2,382 voters are eligible to elect a new municipal council of nine from a total number of 13 candidates.

AMMAN COMMITTEE MEETS: The Greater Amman Municipality committee Tuesday convened under Greater Amman Mayor Abdul Ra'ouf Al Rawabdeh and discussed a number of issues dealing with the municipality activities. It also reviewed reports dealing with King Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein Gardens and Al Jubaiha Recreational Centre.

BETHLEHEM UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT: Bethlehem University President Dr. Ra'ouf Najjar Tuesday returned to Amman after participating in the sixth international conference of the International Federation of Catholic Universities which convened in Jakarta on Aug. 1 to 5.

PEOPLE'S ARMY: The fourth group of Al Koura District school teachers Tuesday graduated from the People's Army. A People's Army commander delivered a speech, during the graduation ceremony, reviewing the importance of military training.

EDUCATION CAMPAIGN: The Jordan Cooperative Organisation (JCO) Tuesday opened a campaign in Tafleeh District to spread guidance and education among members of cooperative organisations in the region. JCO Director General Mawrid Al Tal, who opened the campaign said that cooperatives are essential elements for promoting economic and social projects in Jordan and the government has pledged all possible support for their activities. Tal announced that next year cooperatives will set up a farm for fattening sheep at Ashrich in Tafleeh District and a station for providing farm implements and equipment to local farmers.

NRA encouraged by results of 2nd oil shale testing programme

AMMAN (Petra, J.T.) — The Natural Resources Authority (NRA) Tuesday announced the successful completion of the second phase of a testing programme on oil shale extracted from the Lajun area in Jordan and said the results were encouraging enough to embark on a third phase.

The testing is being conducted by a consortium of West German companies in Frankfurt under a 1986 agreement between West Germany and the NRA, according to the announcement.

The second phase's successful results opens the way for the installation of a plant capable of producing 50,000 barrels of oil a day from the oil shale which is abundant in Lajun and other areas in the Kingdom, according to the announcement.

Upon reporting the end of the first phase, the NRA said oil shale deposits in the country are estimated at 50 billion tonnes and are located at Qatrania, Sultani and Lajun in the southern regions of the Kingdom.

NRA officials said the West German tests yielded middle oil, light oil and naphtha in addition to a by-product of sulphur.

The importance of Jordan's oil shale lies in the fact that huge quantities exist close to the surface of the earth, making exploitation relatively easy and inexpensive, the officials noted.

The NRA's recent geological surveys revealed the presence of six new oil shale-rich areas located between Wadi Assal and Khazrah in the Ghor Al Safi district south of the Dead Sea.

A total of 24 testing wells with depths ranging between 50 and 140 metres were drilled in these regions as the result of the discovery, and oil shale deposits as well as ground water supplies were found, the NRA statement said.

At least 30 million tonnes of oil shale were found in Wadi Assal, according to initial estimates, the statement added.

According to NRA officials, oil shale testing in Germany is being carried out through the direct burning process, which is useful for the generation of electric power.

The NRA, which cooperates closely with the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) in exploiting the Kingdom's oil shale, has sent other consignments of the rock for tests to Finland.

On the basis of encouraging results, NRA officials said plans are being made to implement a full fledged feasibility complex that would produce sufficient electric power to boost the capacity of the national grid.

The exploitation of oil shale

runs parallel to NRA's continued efforts to find oil and additional quantities of natural gas in the Rishah district in a bid to cut Jordan's fuel bill and to find alternative energy resources for the country.

According to NRA's annual report, released Tuesday, Jordan last year produced 146,809 barrels of oil from Hamzeh oil fields numbers one, 12 and 14, and all the produced amounts had been refined at the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company (JPRC) in Zarqa.

The report said tests conducted last year on natural gas field number three at the Rishah oil area, near the Iraqi border, proved the presence of commercial quantities of natural gas at the rate of 15 million cubic metres daily, but full exploitation of the well has been delayed, pending the completion of work on surface installations.

A local company has been entrusted with setting up a station for the collection of oil produced

at Hamzeh fields. The report also stated that NRA teams were busily drilling wells at Al Rishah and Azraq to further explore oil and gas deposits.

In a related development, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources Tuesday opened a seminar on rationing energy in the transport sector.

The seminar, which was opened by the ministry's secretary general, aims to introduce measures designed to enable vehicles to transport fluids in rubber containers while carrying solid goods.

The aim of this process is to reduce the cost of transporting goods and cut down on fuel consumption, according to statements at the opening session.

Officials attending the opening session said the seminar was extremely important because the transport sector consumes nearly 40 per cent of Jordan's total energy consumption.



Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources Tuesday opens a seminar on rationing energy in the transport sector (Petra photo)

U.S. conductor meets NMC students, teachers

AMMAN (J.T.) — The National Music Conservatory (NMC) organised a meeting for the conductor of Oakland Youth Orchestra, a number of his staff, students and teachers from the NMC.

The visitors were shown NMC teaching methods. The NMC is affiliated with the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) and offers music lessons to Jordanian students.

The Oakland Orchestra visited

Jordan to take part in the Jerash Festival of Culture and Arts last month, where it presented two performances.

Late last month the NMC opened a summer music camp for children between the ages of three and 16.

A total of 125 trainees were involved in the camp's activities, which included courses for introducing children to music reading, and writing.

Writers federation accepts 6 new members

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian Writers Federation (JWF) has announced the acceptance of six prominent Jordanian intellectuals as federation members.

These are Izzat Jaradat, Samir Murawee, Suleiman Uheidat, Anas Al Khamra, Mohammad Freihat and Hilmi Abdul Hadi.

The JWF also announced the creation of five committees to help give impetus to the federation's activities.

The JWF, which came into

being last year, announced in June that it has worked out a programme which includes invitations to Jordanian and Arab writers to meet with the public and offer their intellectual and literary work through cultural seminars and festivals.

The JWF President Husni Fariz said that the programme was designed to host the literary and cultural movement in the Kingdom.

Experts discuss effects of noise on people

AMMAN (J.T.) — A specialised committee entrusted with designing a law to reduce the harmful effects of noise on people met Tuesday to draft the final version to be referred to the government for approval.

A committee spokesman said next Tuesday will be the last meeting for the committee before final endorsement and referral to the council of ministers.

The committee, meeting under the chairmanship of Health Minister Zaid Hamzeh, is composed of representatives from the Ministries of Labour and Health, the University of Jordan, Yarmouk University and the Royal Scientific Society.

Hamzeh, who spoke at the meeting, pointed out the grave danger to public health inherent in excessive noise, and urged the committee and concerned authorities to take effective measures to control noise and commotion.



Health Minister Zaid Hamzeh Tuesday chairs a meeting of a committee discussing harmful effects of noise on people

The law aims at reducing noise to the lowest minimum level, especially in residential areas so as to create a healthy climate for citizens, according to the spokesman.

The law, he said, also outlines medical, technical and health conditions that can provide a healthy environment for workers in all fields.

Hamzeh received in his office Monday the president and members of the Jordan Family Planning and Protection Society.

During the visit matters related to the technical support, coordination and collaboration between the Ministry of Health and the society were discussed.

Hamzeh praised the role played by the private sector and other Non-Governmental Organisations in providing health care in general and child spacing services in particular to the community. "The aim is to have healthy mother and healthy child," he added.

Ministry to open evening classes from Sept. 3

AMMAN (Petra, J.T.) — The Ministry of Education has finalised plans for the opening of evening classes on Sept. 3.

The director of the ministry's Secondary and Compulsory Education Department, who made the announcement said the evening classes will be open for citizens who had missed earlier opportunities for learning at schools regardless of their age.

The ministry he said will open a class for every 20 citizens and provide experienced teachers and

essential facilities. These classes offer the citizens the chance to acquire school education.

Last January the Ministry of Education announced that the literacy rate in Jordan was continually rising and reported that a total of 10,710 illiterate adults were attending classes at 645 literacy centres throughout the Kingdom.

The literacy centres benefit those who had no education at all, mostly women in rural regions.

WHAT'S GOING ON EXHIBITIONS

- Art exhibition by Jaber Abdul Fattah Nashid at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- Art exhibition by Khalid Atiyah at the Zarqa Club for the Deaf and Dumb.
- Architectural exhibition at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts at 6:00 p.m.
- Art exhibition: "Silent Nature" at the University of Jordan.

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Tender documents can be available as of 9th August, 1988, for a Non-Refundable fee of JD 80,000 from:

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TELEX: 21969 AMCITY JO

Closing date for accepting bids is 26th Sept. 1988, at 12:00 noon at the same address mentioned above.

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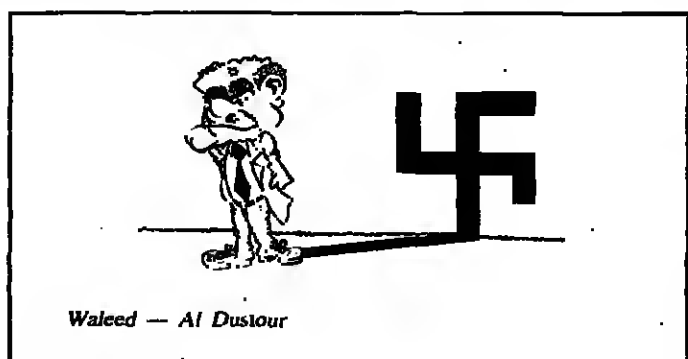
Awesome task

THE UNITED Nations announcement of a ceasefire in the Iran-Iraq war has evoked a natural sigh of deep relief from all corners of the world, much more so from the Gulf and Middle East region which, only three weeks ago, appeared to have resigned to continued bloodshed and spillovers of the conflict as a way of life as long as the Iranian leadership remained deaf to voices of reason. While we share the jubilation and relief of the Iraqi and Iranian as well as others in the Gulf, we cannot but take a peek at what lies ahead. No one envies the U.N. with the mammoth task the world body faces in trying to hammer out a negotiated settlement of the basic territorial conflict since all that the eight years of bitter war has brought about is only a full cycle of the core dispute. Seen strictly within the context of a territorial dispute, the only difference is that it is the U.N. which is trying its hand while it was Algeria which mediated an agreement in 1975. But, the reality stares us in the face that there is no tip-toeing around the fact that it is a totally different kind of leadership that is in power in Tehran today. No doubt, the Iranian leaders, who seem to be considering their acceptance of a ceasefire as a concession to the world, will insist on their pound of flesh when it comes to peace negotiations. We can only hope that the will is strong on both sides to accept the futility of keeping the ambers of hostilities alive and to interact with the diplomatic skills of the U.N. However, many questions remain unanswered; foremost among them is whether the Iranian leaders are willing to accept that the concept of good neighbourliness and non-interference in the affairs of others is the paramount factor in ensuring the security and stability of the region. The anxiety and concern that the Iranian leaders displayed in securing an immediate ceasefire give rise to apprehensions that the Iranian acceptance of peace with Iraq is only temporary. We wonder whether the Iranian moves stem from a realisation that Tehran cannot hope to achieve its objectives in Iraqi soil without neutralising the Arab Gulf states and that attention should now be diverted to bringing about regional changes that are conducive to Iranian designs which could be pursued when the time is right. Perhaps our fears are unfounded. But such a scenario is a very real possibility and makes it incumbent upon the Arab World to get together and review post-war developments in the Gulf region and be prepared to preempt the enactment of the Iranian play.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i: Disappointing peace-loving nations

IN his press conference two days ago King Hussein voiced his deep disappointment with the American policy with regard to the Middle East region, saying that U.S. continued support for Israel and its occupation of Arab lands disappointed not only the Arabs but also all peace-loving nations. This policy, the monarch said, adversely reflects on Washington's status which, as a superpower, ought to shoulder its responsibilities towards peace in the world. This policy has not only done harm to the Palestinian people's national rights and interests alone, but has contributed towards the deterioration of stability in our region and served as a harmful element to U.N. principles and values. All this has happened due to Washington's continued hostile actions towards the causes of justice, stability and peace. One aspect of Washington's negative stand is manifested in its support for Israel in obstructing the convening of an international peace conference, which has been supported by the world community as the only viable means for the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions. Hence, one can conclude that America's policies are embodied in the Zionist plans and terrorist activities against the Palestinian people. The current uprising in Palestine exposes the true nature of the U.S.-Israeli alliance to the whole world.



Al Dustour: New realities

KING Hussein's brief visit to Damascus was within the framework of close brotherly cooperation between Jordan and Syria in all matters of common concern vis-a-vis the current situation in the Middle East. The visit assumes special importance at this moment since it follows closely on the heels of significant developments, specially Jordan's decision to sever its links with the West Bank in response to the desires of the PLO and Arab countries. The Jordanian decision has created new realities and a new political situation in our region, something which requires coordination and close consultations among Arab leaders. These consultations become even more important as they are held between two of the Arab confrontation states which have been shouldering a heavy burden with regard to the Palestinian issue and major responsibilities in the Arab-Israeli conflict. We view this visit as one more step by Jordan to enhance its relations and mutual cooperation with the Arab countries, and hope that the two leaders' efforts will benefit the whole Arab nation.

Sawt Al Shaab: Shifting all responsibilities

JORDAN'S decision to sever links with the West Bank following the conclusion of the Algiers Arab summit meeting was designed to remove all elements of mistrust between the PLO and Jordan, and to shift all responsibilities for the Palestinian people and to implement U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 to the PLO. The decision, which was in response to the requests of the PLO and the Arab countries, was meant first of all to serve the Palestinian people's uprising and enhance the Arab people's uprising against Israeli occupation rule. The Jordanian moves were therefore intended as a means for boosting the role of the PLO in regional and world arenas, and to open the way for the PLO to assume its full responsibilities towards the development of the occupied territories in attaining their liberation. At the same time, Jordan made it clear that cooperation with the PLO is essential and the joint struggle will continue as long as the occupation exists in Arab territories.

Palestinians in Israel: 'We are the sons of this land'

Reprinted from the London based Middle East International

By Julia Slater

"YOU'RE on top of the world! You've just had a son. Congratulations! Your son is an Israeli Arab." So begins an Arabic language advertisement for some investment scheme put out by one of the Israeli banks. The Israeli establishment is not quite as enthusiastic about the birth of Arab citizens as the advertisement would suggest, for it dreads the time when the natural increase in the Arab population will make it face up to the dilemma of democracy versus Zionism. But the interest of the advertisement lies also in its curious underlining of the concept of "Israeli Arab."

That is the way in which the state regards its Arab citizens, but it is less and less the way in which the Arabs define themselves. There are differences in emphasis, to be sure: "I'm a

Bedouin, but also a Palestinian, and also a citizen of Israel." "A Palestinian, an Arab, a Christian, a citizen of Israel. Four in one!" "I feel a deep sense of belonging to the Palestinian people, but I can't say I'm not an Israeli too." "I am a Palestinian Arab," but the indications are that this Palestinian consciousness is growing. Those who have identified wholeheartedly with the Zionist state are in the minority. One of them is Samir Wahabi, from the village of Bayt Jann in the Galilee, a member and would-be Knesset candidate of the Likud Party of Yitzhak Shamir: "I belong to the Druze sect, which is part of the Arab minority in

Israel. It is part of the Arab Nation, and personally my state is the state of Israel. In the past this land was called Palestine, so I could say I belong in that historical sense, but not in any other way."

Wahabi's definition of himself is a perfect illustration of something that many Palestinians complain of: The Israeli attempts to split the Arabs by dividing them into Muslims and Christians, Bedouin and Druze, trying to submerge their national consciousness by exacerbating unimportant differences. To a certain extent the policy has worked, especially in the way that both the Druze and the Bedouin are perceived outside their own communities, on both sides of the Green Line that divides Israel from the occupied territories. Unlike other Arabs, the Druze are obliged to serve in the Israeli army, and the Druze members of the Border Guards have a reputation in the West Bank and Gaza as being among the most brutal of all Israeli soldiers. However, not all the Druze are happy about this state of affairs. Although Samir Wahabi maintains that Bayt Jann does very well because of the loyalty of the villagers to the state, other Druze, even in that same village, have set up an organisation to help returning conscripts because they say that they get a raw deal in comparison with their Jewish counterparts — no help with further education, employment or housing, for example. More than this, another organisation, the Druze Initiative Committee, was started in 1976 to help young Druze resist the draft altogether.

The Bedouin differ from the Druze in that they are not obliged to serve in the army, but some do so by choice. The best their fellows seem to say about them is

that they are *masakin* — pathetic, doing it for the money, and don't understand the implications. But the fact remains that the Bedouin have a reputation for collaborating with the authorities — a

"Unlike other Arabs, the Druze are obliged to serve in the Israeli army."

reputation strengthened by Israeli media coverage. When an Israeli minister visits a Bedouin area the TV will show him being welcomed warmly, but will not show the demonstrations against him. Sheikh Musa Al Atawna put these collaborators and their shows of support into context:

"When Hitler occupied France, there were people who worked with Germany against the French. If satan is the occupier, someone will work with him. Roni Milo (the government minister responsible for Arab affairs) gave these people an office, a phone, tables, chairs and a coffee pot. Then he phoned and called them to go and meet him to speak against the uprising. I said to them: 'Aren't you ashamed? The whole world is saying that Israel is not good, and you say it is good. It's shameful.' And they couldn't answer. What could they say? Those people who went are just ignorant."

In theory the Arab citizens of Israel enjoy the same rights as the Jewish ones. But they are faced with a basic question that is irrelevant to Jewish citizens: Does a Zionist state, a state conceived explicitly for Jews, have anything to offer them? Is it possible to work within its constraints? Here there is a range of opinions. Sheikh Musa says that the state gives him the opportunities to make his protests legally, by publicising his grievances in the press or in demonstrations.

The result is not guaranteed, but he believes that the left wing Zionist party, Mapam, which he supports, can and does fight successfully in the Knesset for the rights of Arabs and Jews. In the 1984 elections, nearly half the Arab votes went to Zionist parties of various kinds, mainly left wing ones. It might seem surprising that any Arabs vote for the right wing parties at all — in 1984 they got about 10 per cent of the Arab vote — but Samir Wahabi claims that it is in fact the Likud that has done most for the Arabs, for example, by making the Camp David agreement with Egypt, and by getting the Muslims the right to perform the Hajj pilgrimage.

The rest of the Arab votes cast went to one of the two other parties which are commonly regarded as being non-Zionist and as representing Arab rights, the Progressive List for Peace (PLP), and the Israeli Communist Party (ICP). The PLP is a new party, created in 1984 as a non-Communist alternative to the ICP. Both have Jews and Arabs in their top leadership. Like all Communist parties, the ICP bases its strategy on the workers, Jews and Arabs alike. It attributes the fact that most of its votes come from the Arab sector to Zionist propaganda about its relations with the USSR and the PLO, which scares off potential Jewish support. However, the Communists have faith in parliamentary democracy, in court-judicial opinion, and in non-violent extra-parliamentary means of struggle, involving the broadest possible range of people. As Salim Jabran, of the ICP secretariat, put it: "Since the June '67 war the right has been getting stronger, and this is a threat to the Arabs and the Jews. We tell our democratic and liberal and humane Jewish brothers that we are in the same boat, and we have to defend ourselves

together. The rightists here are moving to the right, but the future is with us."

But there is a sizeable body of opinion among the Palestinians of Israel which does not share this faith. It is illegal to set up a party which is actually anti-Zionist and violates "the principles on which the state of Israel rests." The last attempt to do this in the mid 1960s — by the *al-Ard* organisation — was quickly quashed. Even the PLP was nearly disqualified on the same grounds in 1984. But movements are permitted. The best known is *Abna al-Balad*, which stands — successfully — in local elections in Arab villages and towns, but refuses to take part in parliamentary elections because it believes that a Zionist institution cannot help the Palestinians in Israel. It would like to see a socialist society, with freedom of religion for all. As for the democratic rights that Israel is so proud of, it depends how you want to exer-

"We have to make use of the laws that exist to express our opinions."

cise them. One *Abna al-Balad* supporter put it like this: "Democracy is for the Jews. We have to make use of the laws that exist to express our opinions. But then they arrest us when we say we are part of the Palestinian people, and are represented by the PLO. We tell them there are laws providing for the freedom of opinion, but they say we're not punishing you for your views, but because you are a threat to the security of the state."

Last year the Israeli government received the controversial Arens plan (named after the former Likud minister in charge of Arab affairs), which dealt with the issue of the Israeli Arabs. Basically the plan recognises the

disenchantment of the Arab population with the Zionist system, and proposes rewards for those who cooperate as loyal citizens, and punishments for those who do not. Arab self help bodies, such as *Hadaf*, for example, set up by *Abna al-Balad*, which do such things as provide courses, and run clubs and creches, fear that the funding they receive from abroad for their activities will be cut off. The Arens plan is only one of their fears. Worse than this is the notion of "transfer", moving the Arab population to other Arab states, which is being more and more widely aired. Samir Wahabi describes the idea as "extremist," and denies that this could ever be Likud policy; nevertheless, some Likud members are calling for it. At the moment it is assumed that transfer applies only to the occupied territories, but the fact that the idea can be entertained at all is naturally a source of concern to the Arab citizens, who have been referred to in the Knesset as "a cancer in the body of the state." President Herzog, Prime Minister Shamir and Defence Minister Rabin uttered not very veiled threats of dire consequences if the Arabs "follow extremists." There have been calls for the reimposition of military government in the Arab areas of northern Israel such as controlled their lives up to 1966.

The Palestinians in Israel disagree about a number of matters of both substance and strategy. But there is one thing that unites them right across the political spectrum. Whatever happens in the future, whether there is a Palestinian state alongside Israel whether their own rights are eroded yet further, they are not moving from where they are: "We are not immigrants, but the sons of this land, and have been here for thousands of years. We cannot exebange it for another."

Syria tightens grip on Lebanon

By Michael Kali
Reuters

BEIRUT — Syria has tightened its grip over Lebanon in the past three months to reinforce its role as a major power in the Middle East, political sources say. They said Syria had carried out a "military and political purge" of the territory under its control, which comprises about 65 per cent of Lebanon, uprooting Palestinian groups and curbing the power of pro-Iranian militants.

The crackdown was helping Syrian President Hafez Al Assad in his efforts to mend fences with the United States, which has long regarded Damascus as a "terrorist" regime and intransigent opponent of compromise, they said.

Control of Shatila and Bourj Al Barajneh, two Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut which were once strongholds of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat, fell to pro-Syrian Palestinians early in July. Rumours, which the sources said were inspired by Damascus, later circulated that Syrian troops might move into the Shouf mountains, heartland of the Druze Progressive Social Party (PSP). The Shouf, a rugged maze of high ridges, form a natural barrier between Syrian forces in west Beirut and the Bekaa Valley in east Lebanon.

The sources said the rumours were a Syrian signal to PSP leader Walid Jumblatt, who has relative independence from direct Syrian military influence, to stop providing a safe haven for Arafat's supporters in his mountainous fiefdom.

Jumblatt obliged

Jumblatt quickly took the hint, the sources said, so that Arafat's power base was now restricted to refugee camps east of the southern port of Sidon. Syrian forces have so far not moved into the Shouf.

Pro-Syrian political and religious leaders from various factions are now flocking to Damascus to consult Syrian officials about Lebanon's forthcoming presidential election, due by September 23.

One sign of a shift in Syrian tactics ahead of the election was a meeting between Assad and Lebanese President Amin Gemayel, the sources said.

A presidential aide described it as the first "serious meeting" between the two heads of state since 1986, when Gemayel refused to endorse a Syrian-sponsored peace pact concluded by rival Christian, Shi'ite and Druze militias.

The sources said Assad's conciliatory stand towards Gemayel was prompted by his awareness of the key role played by any Lebanese head of state and the Christian community in general.

Assad also wanted the next president to give his stamp of approval to the presence of the estimated 25,000 Syrian troops in Lebanon, they said.

Under an unwritten national covenant adopted in 1943, the president is always a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim and the speaker of parliament a Shi'ite Muslim.

Analysts said three powers had influence over the election, namely Syria, the United States and the Christians. No single party could independently steer the election its way, but each had a veto power.

Diplomats in Beirut told Reuters the United States had passed word to local and foreign forces in Lebanon that the election should be held peacefully.

U.S.-Syrian agreement

They said the international community wanted a government capable of controlling the chaos which had adversely affected many Western countries, most spectacularly in the kidnappings plaguing Beirut.

Washington wanted a basically pro-Western president who was favoured by the Christians, enjoyed Syria's blessing and was backed by the Muslims, they said.

"The Americans do not want to antagonise the Syrians, but they are keen the Syrians do not have full control of Lebanon or strengthen their influence in the region," one independent parliamentarian said.

Political sources speak of a deal between U.S. envoy Vernon Walters and Assad under which Syria would assume responsibility for containing the Shi'ite fun-

damentalists of Hizbollah (party of God) in return for improved relations with Washington, including the restoration of Western financial aid.

Syrian troops were sent into Beirut's southern suburbs on May 27 to end three weeks of savage inter-Shi'ite fighting, a move which reduced the influence of the radical pro-Iranian Hizbollah.

The pro-Syrian Shi'ite Amal militia had earlier defeated Hizbollah in a series of clashes for control of South Lebanon, a base for guerrilla attacks on Israel.

"These valuable Syrian gifts to the Americans could not be presented for free," said one Western diplomat.

One political analyst said Assad's attempts to improve relations with Washington were partly prompted by a U.S.-Soviet rapprochement aimed at easing tensions in the world's major trouble spots, including the Middle East.

"Assad's decision to draw closer to the U.S. is motivated by his belief that the new Soviet regime is no longer inclined to strict and uncompromising policies in the region," he said.

Diplomats said Syria's actions in Lebanon were also motivated by military defeats suffered by its ally, Iran, in the war with Iraq.

The Iraqi victories boosted Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, Assad's bitter rival in the Arab World, and reflected on the Syrian leader's standing in the region, they said.

C. America: Time for a deal?

By Bryan Brumley
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The head of Latin American studies at the U.S. Army War College says Nicaragua's Sandinista army is too strong to be defeated by U.S.-backed contra guerrillas and that it is time to cut a deal.

"Half a loaf is better than no loaf at all," said Col. Alden Cunningham, who was army attaché at the U.S. embassy in Nicaragua from May 1985 until December 1986. Since then, he has been director of American studies at the War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

"I don't say that we should stop supporting the contras, because without that the Sandinistas are not going to have any reason to talk. The reason they are willing to talk now is because of the successes of the contras," Cunningham said in a telephone interview Friday.

Talks between the warring parties broke down in early June, although a fragile truce remains in place while Costa Rican President Oscar Arias tries to arrange another session.

The United States continues to send humanitarian aid to the contras. And this week the Senate may vote to send them as much as \$20 million in military aid, to be released by a subsequent congressional vote. Military aid was suspended last winter.

Even if the United States sends military aid to the contras, it

should not expect to win, said Cunningham, because over the past three years the Soviet-backed government in Nicaragua has doubled the strength of its counterinsurgency forces.

Cunningham's view first came to light in an article published in the March edition of the War College's quarterly "Parameters" magazine. He has spent the last 12 years dealing with Central America, as assistant army attaché in Mexico, an earlier stint at the War College, and in a policy job at the Pentagon.

The Sandinistas, bolstered by record levels of aid from the Soviet Union and up to 3,000 Cuban military advisers, have beefed up their counterinsurgency forces to 45,000 soldiers, forming more than 13 irregular warfare battalions, more than 12 light bomber battalions and a frontier guard corps of 5,000.

"Army firepower and mobility have also made progress over the last two years," Cunningham wrote. "With the approximate doubling of the helicopter force from six Hind helicopters and 15 Hip helicopters to 10-12 Hinds and 35 Hips and the addition of between 1,000 and 2,000 trucks in 1986-87 alone, the Sandinista forces have gained increased mobility in the counterinsurgency war."

The contras, which Cunningham estimates to be about 18,000, have "created a major strain in Sandinista attention and

resources." But they have failed to gain a military or political foothold along the heavily populated Pacific coast.

Cunningham said he had come to three main conclusions: "The Sandinistas are not going to become democrats, we are not going to invade, and the contras are not going to win a military victory."

And the United States has three main options: Arm the contras to conduct a long war, hoping to wear down the Sandinistas; prepare the contras for a major push, which would give them enough of a political foothold to rationalise a U.S. invasion; or negotiate.

A deal is the only real option, he concludes.

The U.S. aim in the negotiations, he said, should be to "assure that our security concerns were taken care of and open up as much political space as we could" for the opposition forces. Senior administration officials have expressed similar goals.

"What we must keep in mind" he wrote, "is that we do not have any real present alternative in view of the strong likelihood that the guerrillas cannot defeat the Sandinistas and in view of our own unwillingness to engage U.S. forces."

The contras are unlikely to win a protracted war against an entrenched Sandinista government, backed by the Kremlin.

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U.S. said holding \$12b in Iran arms

By Abner Katzman
The Associated Press

THE HAGUE — The United States is holding billions of dollars worth of impounded Iranian military equipment, and Iran has raised the issue in connection with American hostages in Lebanon.

Statements last week by Iran's acting commander-in-chief, Hashemi Rafsanjani, marked the third time since the 1979 seizure of the 52 American hostages at the U.S. embassy in Tehran that the issue of Iranian assets frozen by the United States has been linked to American hostages.

"If he is talking about military equipment, then the arbitration of Iran's claim against the United States for the value of spare parts and other equipment ordered before the revolution is continuing," said an American official at the Iran-U.S. claims tribunal.

The tribunal is adjudicating billions of dollars worth of claims arising out of the 1979 Iranian revolution. The American official spoke on condition of anonymity.

Iran has filed a \$12 billion claim against the United States for the military equipment and spare parts, the largest claim before the tribunal. Iran seeks delivery of the equipment or payment of its value.

The military material was ordered by Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi's government through the U.S. government's foreign military sales programme.

Transfer of the equipment to Iran, as well as billions of dollars of Iranian funds on deposit in American banks, was frozen by the U.S. government after the seizure of the embassy hostages.

The Algiers accords that resulted in freedom for the hostages in January 1981 also unlocked the Iranian assets.

But despite the Algiers accords, the military equipment, much of which was already paid for, was then impounded by the U.S. government to prevent its use in the Iran-Iraq war.

"We do have a bunch of their (Iran's) stuff, and there's no question that it's their stuff," said a tribunal official, who also spoke on condition he not be identified.

In August 1980, almost 10 months after the hostages seizure, Iran said at the United Nations that the United States' release of the frozen Iranian funds would be a "symbolic gesture" that might speed the Iranian parliament's debate on the fate of the 52 American hostages.

In addition to freedom for the hostages, the 1981 Algiers accords effectively worked out guidelines for the arbitration of financial claims against Iran and the return of money left over.

The American official at the tribunal said that the \$9 billion in financial assets frozen by the United States already has been returned to Iran or dispersed to its creditors via the Algiers accords, which established the tribunal.

The bulk of the money went to repay bank loans to Iran, but \$2.915 billion left after repayment was returned to Iran during the course of 1981.

In late 1986, Rafsanjani reportedly linked the return of U.S.-held Iranian assets to possible Iranian intercession for Americans taken hostage in Lebanon.

The issue came up against the backdrop of negotiations for the release of \$451.4 million in a New York Federal Reserve Bank account.

That money was the residue of \$3.667 billion deposited at the bank to repay syndicated bank loans owed by Iran.

The reported hostage-assets link was later denied by Tehran, and the \$451.4 million was paid to Iran in May 1987.

Much of the impounded military material, which reportedly includes spare parts for Iran's outgunned air force, is stored in various private warehouses rented by Iran.

On July 27, Iran's official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) quoted Rafsanjani, who is also speaker of the Iranian parliament, as saying that "if (President) Reagan were sincere ... he would release the Iranian assets, I have said that once he does so, then we will use our leverage in Lebanon and help solve the issue of the hostages."



A scene from "those days" ... a crowd gathers in front of the U.S. embassy in Tehran and others pray while militants remain inside keeping watch over American hostages. This photo was taken in November 1979 (Gamma photo).

Tunisia, Libya to increase cooperation

BEIRUT (R) — Tunisian President Zine Al Abidine Ibn Ali ended a three-day visit to Libya Monday during which the two countries agreed to boost their ties, the Libyan news agency JANA reported.

JANA said Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi and Ibn Ali agreed on improving cooperation in "all fields as a step towards unity of the five Maghreb countries" (Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania, Tunisia and Libya).

The five countries are committed to trying to establish a common market similar to the European Economic Community.

"Both leaders signed agreements in the fields of transportation, information, agriculture and fishing," the agency said.

Ibn Ali arrived in Tripoli Saturday on his first visit to Libya since taking office.

Both leaders hailed the efforts of the United Nations to end the Iran-Iraq war.

JANA said Libya and Tunisia would "keep up their support of the Palestinians, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in their struggle against the Zionist enemy."



Tunisian President Zine Al Abidine Ibn Ali (left) and Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi

Egyptian fugitive killed, another wounded

CAIRO (AP) — Police Monday shot to death one of the two escaped convicts who broke out of prison last month while serving a life term for complicity in the assassination of President Anwar Sadat. The second convict was wounded and arrested.

The state-run Middle East News Agency (MENA) carried an Interior Ministry statement saying police ambushed Mohammed Khames at the southern suburb of Maadi. Khames "opened fire on the force which exchanged shots leading to his death," the statement said.

In a separate incident Monday, police rounded up Ahmad Al Aswani who "resisted with gunfire and plastic bombs, wounding himself and his brother who was with him, as well as one of the police officers," the statement said.

The statement said Aswani's brother, Tarek, had "participated in plotting and implementing the escape of the two convicts in addition to a third, Essam Al Kemary, from maximum-security Torah prison on the outskirts of Cairo July 17.

Eight days after the escape, police shot Kemary to death in a firefight during an attack on an apartment where the three men had been hiding. Khames and Aswani ran away.

The three prisoners, members of the Muslim fundamentalist Jihad Group, escaped using iron bars to force open their cell door. Knocking their guards down they seized their rifles and shot their way out to an awaiting car.

The statement said police had recently arrested Khaled De-kheit, the owner of the apartment and a Jihad member.

The Jihad Group has no known connection to Lebanon's Jihad. It was blamed for Sadat's slaying and a subsequent abortive coup attempt in the southern city of Assiut which left 87 people, including 66 policemen dead.

In a series of trials after Sadat's assassination, three convicted assassins were executed by firing squad, another two were banged and more than 120 given prison terms up to life.

Khames, Aswani and Kemary were given life sentences for participating in plotting the assassination.

U.S. to begin processing arms sales to Kuwait

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States said Monday it would begin implementing the sale of \$1.9 billion in F-18 fighter aircraft and other arms to Kuwait after a compromise with Congress and Kuwait.

"We are pleased to say that the sale of F-18s to Kuwait has successfully passed through the congressional notification process after close consultation with Congress and the Kuwaitis," State Department spokeswoman Phyllis Oakley said.

"The government of Kuwait has approved the sale. We will be proceeding with implementation of the sale now," she told reporters.

Gulf truce raises hopes for hostages

By Diana Abdallah
Reuters

BEIRUT — A ceasefire in the Gulf war could pave the way to freedom for 18 Western hostages seized by pro-Iranian militants in Lebanon, political analysts and diplomats said Tuesday.

"The truce might open doors for negotiations now that Iran has made some policy changes and is ready to talk peace," one analyst said.

"Iran's need to hold hostages in return for money and weapons should be reduced now," the analyst added. "And with it the concept of holding the captives should change too."

Analysts and diplomats widely believed the Western hostages were kidnapped by pro-Iranian extremists on orders from Tehran to help Iran in its war with Iraq.

They said they were cautiously optimistic the ceasefire, to take effect Aug. 20, could bring a quick release of some hostages.

Those still held include 10 Americans, three Britons and a West German.

Most are believed imprisoned in underground cells in Beirut's southern suburbs, a former bastion of the pro-Iranian fundamentalist Hizbollah (Party of God) before the deployment of Syrian troops in May to end inter-Shi'ite battles.

One diplomat said Iran's willingness to accept the role of the U.N. in ending the Gulf war "was an encouraging sign which could help the hostages."

One of the hostages, American Colonel William Higgins, was serving as a U.N. observer in southern Lebanon. He was abducted Feb. 17 this year and a Hizbollah official last week came close to claiming responsibility.

The U.N. Security Council last month called on members to "use their influence in any way possible" to gain his release.

U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar appealed for the release of hostages during talks with Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati on the ceasefire.

The hostage-takers, by freeing Americans and Frenchmen in the last three years, secured weapons and the repayment of loans for Iran.

The main demand of several of the clandestine groups claiming the kidnaps was a change in American and Western policies in the Middle East and the Gulf.

"That demand is not valid anymore, but one has to be cautious as the kidnappers might come up

with new demands," the diplomat said. "But in general the picture looks much brighter for the hostages," he added.

Another diplomat said Iran now appeared more inclined to hold talks with Western countries. Britain and the United States have signalled they want improved relations with Tehran.

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said in July Britain

wanted improved relations with Iran and might send back a diplomat to Iran after Tehran accepted the U.N. ceasefire.

President Ronald Reagan said it was time of U.S.-Iranian talks on freeing the hostages.

The sister of an American hostage said Monday she was cautiously optimistic that the ceasefire in the Gulf war would lead to talks on the release of her brother and other captives.

"I am very pleased to see a ceasefire take place and I certainly hope that opens the door to further dialogue with the United States with regard to the hostages," said Peggy Say, sister of AP reporter Terry Anderson.

Hamadi confesses to TWA hijacking

FRANKFURT (Agencies) — A Lebanese confessed in a West German court Tuesday to the 1985 hijacking of a U.S. airliner to Beirut in which an American serviceman was shot to death.

Mohammad Ali Hamadi made the admission in a statement in Frankfurt prison courtroom where he has been on trial for more than a month.

It was the first time Hamadi had spoken about the hijacking charge at the trial. He did not refer to a charge of killing U.S. navy diver Robert Stethem, who was shot dead during the hijacking.

In a statement issued shortly after Tuesday's session of the trial began at 9:15 a.m., Hamadi said he and another man commanded the Trans World Airlines (TWA) plane to Beirut after it took off from Athens, with the aim of obtaining the release of hundreds of Lebanese and Palestinians held in Israel.

The hijacking ended and 39 American hostages were freed at Beirut airport after 17 days when Israel agreed to release about 700 prisoners.

Hamadi, who has said he took part in fighting against Israeli troops in Lebanon, told the court

the decision to hijack the plane was taken only after all other attempts to secure the prisoners' release had failed.

Hamadi said an American airliner was chosen for hijacking because the United States was the most powerful and important ally of Israel.

"If this act which I committed is against the law, then it is a result of illegal conduct on the part of Israel," Hamadi said while reading from a prepared statement in the heavily guarded courtroom.

In his statement, Hamadi denounced Israel for causing problems in Lebanon, and also condemned the United States.

In his statement Tuesday, Hamadi accused Israel of violating international law with its periodic incursions into Lebanon.

While Hamadi admitted to being one of the hijackers, he denied having shot the American to death.

"The pistol was in his (alleged hijacker Hassan Izzeddine's) hand," Hamadi said. "I didn't use it. Our orders were not to harm anyone, but I couldn't convince him not to shoot."

Hamadi said that Izzeddine was in charge of the hijacking.

Vassiliou, Denktash to meet in Geneva Aug. 24

UNITED NATIONS (R) — A landmark meeting between Cypriot President George Vassiliou and Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash Aug. 24 will be held in Geneva, U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar said Monday.

The U.N.-mediated talks, originally scheduled for New York, were announced last month as an effort to bring together the two leaders for the first time to resume negotiations on reunification of the island, separated since 1974.

"I hope it will be a resumption of the talks between the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots," the secretary general told reporters at a news conference.

Turkey invaded Cyprus in 1974 and seized the northern third of the island after a short-lived coup in Nicosia engineered by the military junta which ruled Greece at the time.

The talks have been viewed as a chance to reopen negotiations

three years after the collapse of talks in New York between Denktash and Syros Kyprianou, the Cypriot president who was succeeded by Vassiliou six months ago.

Turkish Cypriots, backed by 29,000 Turkish troops, declared independence in 1983, but only Ankara has formally recognised the Turkish republic of northern Cyprus.

In Athens, Cypriot Foreign Minister George Iacovou said Monday that prospects for solving the island's problems were positive.

"The prospects are very good. There is an international climate of détente which has influenced very positively all the peripheral problems and we nurture the hope that Cyprus will not be an exception," he told journalists.

Iacovou briefed Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu Monday at a working lunch on recent developments and the Aug. 24 Geneva meeting.

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Oil prices jump on Gulf truce

TOKYO (R) — Crude oil prices surged after news of a ceasefire date in the Gulf war but many traders remain wary about the longer-term outlook, Far East oil experts said Tuesday.

Prices were marked up around 50 cents a barrel by traders who expect a truce will improve cooperation between members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

Many remained cautious, uncertain of the potential of Iran and Iraq to increase exports when hostilities cease.

Britain's key Brent blend oil jumped to around \$15.50 from just below \$15 at the end of U.S. trading Friday. The Middle East benchmark, Dubai crude, rose to \$13.85 from around \$13.40.

"The market is taking the ceasefire as a constructive factor for OPEC," one trader said. "But the logic is bearish because Iran and Iraq will boost oil production in the long term."

Experts are uncertain how soon and how much production could increase.

Iran's potential is likely to be drastically below its six million barrels per day (b/d) before the 1979 revolution because of poor maintenance of wells, they said.

A Reuters survey estimated Iran pumped 2.3 b/d in July,

within its 2.369 million OPEC production quota. The sources said it probably could boost output only by around 300,000 b/d in the short- to medium-term.

Iraq, which does not accept an OPEC quota because it is lower than Iran's pumped 2.65 million b/d in July.

Most sources said Iraq could not increase exports significantly before new pipelines to the Mediterranean and Red Sea were completed late in 1989. Others said Iraq could install prepared facilities in the Shatt Al Arah waterway within three months and increase potential by 800,000 b/d.

At the same time, steadily increasing OPEC production and high consumer stocks cause concern. "Probably by the end of September, (worldwide) stocks will be 100 million barrels higher than last year," said Yasuhiro Tashiro, a chief economist for the Idemitsu Kosan Oil Company.

He said the ceasefire announcement encouraged traders to expect another meeting of the OPEC price monitoring com-

mittee. They will expect the committee to call a full emergency conference before the next regular meeting scheduled for Nov. 21, and will expect greater unity among the 13 OPEC members and more positive efforts to raise prices.

"As long as the expectations continue, the market will be in an uptrend," Tashiro said.

Meanwhile, world oil stocks are now at their highest level since 1982, with many countries storing 100 days supply, Indonesian Energy Minister Ginanjar Kartasasmita said Tuesday.

He told reporters that world oil prices were unlikely to recover much until October because of the huge stocks built up by industrialised countries.

Referring to last week's OPEC price committee meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland, Ginanjar said: "Whatever the results of the meeting, the fact is that there is too much oil in the market. In Japan alone the oil stocks are for 150 days."

"If prices want to improve, the (world) stock must be drawn down first, not by just making statements or joint communications," said Ginanjar, speaking after a coal seminar.

He said the results so far of

OPEC Secretary-General Subroto's efforts to shore-up prices had been quite good and these would continue.

"If all these (moves) are successful, there will be a gradual decrease of oil stocks. Only then will prices improve. I think this will happen in the fourth quarter (of 1988). The soonest in October. I think prices will still be not good in September due to the large amount of stocks," he added.

"In the fourth quarter, demand for oil will increase because of the winter season. But even with this prices will improve only if stocks have been drawn down," Ginanjar said.

Asked about the level of world stocks, Ginanjar said: "Japan has a stock for around 150 days. Stock in other countries varies from one to another, but mostly above 100 days. World oil stocks now in fact are the highest since 1982."

Ginanjar ruled out a further price committee meeting of OPEC early next month, but said it could take place in the middle of September. He said Indonesia had offered to host the next meeting of the five-member price panel, which comprises Algeria, Indonesia, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela.

84 Jordanian firms to attend Baghdad fair

AMMAN (J.T.) — At least 84 Jordanian industrial businesses have voiced their desire to take part in the Baghdad International Fair which is scheduled to open on Nov. 1, 1988 in the Iraqi capital.

Al Ra'i Arabic newspaper quoted informed sources as saying that more Jordanian firms were expected to apply for participation in the fair which will last until Nov. 15.

Meanwhile, a Jordanian-Iraqi committee is due to meet in

Amman next week to follow up the implementation of agreements and deals concluded by the joint Jordanian-Iraqi Higher Committee meetings held here last December.

Among the main topics on the committee's agenda is the question of imports and exports between the two countries, according to Al Ra'i.

It said that the secretary-general of the Ministry of Industry and Trade Mohammad Saqaf will lead Jordan's team to the talks.

Jordanian exports rise

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan's national exports rose by 194.5 per cent in the first four months of 1988 over those of the same period in 1987 registering JD 85.5 million against JD 29 million last year, according to a statistical bulletin issued by the Amman Chamber of Industry Monday.

The bulletin said that national exports rose noticeably to Sudan, Lebanon, Tunisia, Iraq, Asian countries and the U.S. in the first four months of 1988. It said that during this period the country's exports to South Yemen amounted to JD 51.183.

The bulletin said that national increases in exports to India,

Pakistan, Malaysia and China were due largely to more consignments of potash especially to India.

Jordan's pharmaceutical products, it said, are now making their way to Nigeria and Djibouti in addition to various Arab markets.

The bulletin also revealed that Jordan's exports of fertilisers, to Holland, Belgium, the U.K. and West Germany increased in the first four months of this year.

The bulletin also reported unspecified increases in exports of industrial products specially furniture, kitchens, plastic products, leather and cosmetics.

Sweden considers Jordan as M.E. regional centre

AMMAN (J.T.) — Sweden's Ambassador to Jordan Lars Lonnback met in Amman Monday with the Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary-General Mohammad Saqaf to discuss economic ties between the two countries.

Saqaf was quoted later by Al Ra'i Arabic newspaper as saying

that the possibility of considering Jordan as a regional centre for Swedish firms was among the topics discussed at the meeting.

He said that the proposal came originally from Sweden which considers Jordan as a central location in the region and offering the required infrastructure for Swedish companies' operations.

Turkish lira drops

ISTANBUL (R) — The Turkish lira dropped 1.73 per cent against the dollar Monday in the first stage of a move towards a floating interbank currency market.

A cross-section of banks and a foreign exchange dealer joined the central bank for a first joint fixing of a daily exchange rate at 1,481 lira to the dollar, a 25-lira drop.

"It was very successful," said the central bank's Yaman Toruner, head of the money markets and funds.

Bankers and economists welcomed the move towards a floating lira, one of Prime Minister Turgut Ozal's major targets, but some warned care was needed to avoid a run on the currency.

The open market interbank lira rate — freed last month for deals

over \$50,000 — closed Monday above 1,509 to the dollar. One bank said the central bank sold it \$100,000 in that range during the fixing session.

"We are going to see some more jumps in the next few days. The central bank must take strong measures to stop people speculating on foreign exchange," said one senior banker in Istanbul, Turkey's commercial capital.

The lira fell 23 per cent against the dollar in January on the Istanbul Bazaar black market after a public loss of trust.

Officials say tight control will be kept on the money supply, but the lira is still suffering from inflation that rose to 75.5 per cent at end-July.

Kuwait promises to limit B.P. stake

LONDON (R) — Kuwait pledged Tuesday not to raise its 21.68 per cent stake in oil giant British Petroleum Co. Plc. (B.P.), assuaging takeover fears in Britain.

The London-based Kuwait Investment Office (KIO) signed legally-binding deeds which oil analysts said effectively promised not to mount a takeover of Britain's biggest oil company.

Concern grew in Britain after the KIO, which spends the OPEC state's petrodollars, began snapping up cheap B.P. stock after its share price collapsed in the October stock market crash.

The collapse coincided with the British government's decision to sell off its remaining 31.5 per cent

stake in B.P.

Trade and Industry Secretary Lord Young launched a Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC) inquiry into the stake in May to judge whether it was against public interest.

Industry sources said B.P.'s management became progressively worried when the Kuwait stake was on the increase, fearing B.P.'s independence could be impaired.

Oil experts said it appeared that by signing a formal document, Kuwait hoped to keep B.P. share prices firm and guarantee the MMC would approve its stake.

Kuwait had already given assurances to the British govern-

ment that it would limit its involvement in B.P.

"They are putting in writing what they already promised, to increase their chances of clearing the MMC inquiry," said oil analyst Jeremy Elden of stockbrokers Phillips and Drew.

The KIO said it will now limit its stake to the current 21.68 per cent and will not use the voting power of more than 14.9 per cent of the company's stock.

It also agreed not to block any board appointments proposed by B.P. and said it will not seek a directorship itself.

"Kuwait will use its interest in B.P. only to protect its investment and not to further any other

commercial or political interest of Kuwait," it said.

Should the KIO sell any shares it will never in future buy more than 20 per cent of the company, it added.

The deeds were signed without pressure from the British government and will stay in force whatever the results of the MMC investigation, which are expected in the next month.

The MMC has been told about the deeds and they will form part of the KIO's evidence to the inquiry.

The stock market welcomed the Kuwaiti pledge and B.P. fully paid shares rose five pence (\$8.5 cents) to £2.62 (\$4.45).

Japanese begin vigorous buying spree

TOKYO (R) — After years of saving and penny-pinching, Japanese consumers have started a buying spree that has sparked an economic boom beyond economists' expectations.

Some of the brisk buying has spilled overseas, but the main thrust is still at home and helping to fill the money chests of Japanese businesses, economists said.

Consumer spending has triggered a chain reaction, said

senior economist Takashi Kiuchi at Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan Ltd., adding: "We have renewed economic strength."

Kiuchi forecasts Japan's gross national product (GNP) will grow at a brisk five per cent in the 1988 financial year ending next March 31, and about four per cent the following year, owing to this surge in consumer spending.

Most economists until recently expected Japanese growth to be around just four per cent or less in this financial year.

Economist Richard Jerram at Kleinwort Benson International Inc. predicted the buying would continue.

"It is hard to see anything that might threaten it," he said. "Employment has increased. Wages are higher. And both encourage consumers to buy more."

Kazutaka Miyazaki, economist for Dai-ichi Kangyo Bank Ltd., said workers are taking home more pay from larger summer bonuses and increased overtime and would soon have even more to spend. The government just lowered income taxes and that effect would appear in September paychecks, he added.

Because spending is so strong, manufacturers and service companies are pouring substantial funds into their factories and facilities to keep up with the smart demand and this is also helping to drive the growth of the economy,

Jerram said.

Next year several factors are nearly in place to help the consumer spending engine even more, he said. The most important will likely come in January when Japan's government offices begin closing twice a month on Saturdays as well as Sunday, providing two-day weekends for government employees.

Banks, brokerages and stock exchanges are expected to follow this example and close every Saturday from February.

The consumer spending boom was sparked when the government spent 20 per cent more on public works last financial year to revive the sagging domestic economy, economists said.

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AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Tuesday rates Local selling rates in J.S.			
Belgian franc (for 10)	93.6	Saudi riyal	103.0
Dutch guilder	173.4	Syrian lira (for JD 1)	97.0
French franc	36.0	Lebanese lira (for JD 1)	890.0
Italian lira (for 100)	26.5	Iraqi dinar	440.0
Japanese yen (for 100)	277.7	Kuwaiti dinar	1323.0
Swedish crown	37.2	Egyptian pound	160.0
Swiss franc	234.1	Qatari riyal	103.25
U.K. sterling pound	632.5	UAE dirham	102.5
U.S. dollar	371.1	Omani riyal	975.0
Deutschemark	195.7	Bahraini dinar	995.0

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

Activity on the Amman Financial Market for August 9, 1988

	Number	Volume	Contracts
Regular market:	262368	JD 247888	357
Top three companies:			
Arah Bank Limited	220	JD 23285	16
Aladdin Industries	17150	JD 20994	15
Jordan Lime and Brick	79356	JD 16150	33
Parallel market:	22286	JD 9932	—
Development bonds:	—	—	—
Treasury bills & bonds:	—	—	—
Other debentures:	—	—	—

JORDAN BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Ministry of Industry and Trade	663191	Jordan Commercial Centres	603807
Ministry of Supply	602121	Corporation	642001
Ministry of Finance	636321	Free Zones Corporation	642001
Ministry of Planning	644466	Amman Financial Market	660170
Ministry of Labour	663188	Amman Chamber of Commerce	666151
Ministry of Communications	847391	Amman Chamber of Industry	644747
Ministry of Agriculture	639291	Association of Banks in Jordan	662256
Income Tax Department	660151	Jordan Association of Insurance	643770
Central Bank of Jordan	630301	General Statistics Department	846171
Amman Customs Department	721611	Jordanian Businessmen	680663
Social Security Corporation	643000	Association	
Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation	721194		

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One Sterling	1.7060/70	U.S. dollar	—
One U.S. dollar	1.2095/2105	Canadian dollar	—
	1.8955/62	Deutschemark	—
	2.1400/10	Dutch guilders	—
	1.5837/47	Swiss francs	—
	39.67/70	Belgian francs	—
	6.3930/60	French francs	—
	139.9/140	Italian lire	—
	133.65/75	Japanese yen	—
	6.4830/80	Swedish crowns	—
	6.8650/8700	Norwegian crowns	—
	7.2300/50	Danish crowns	—
One ounce of gold	428.70/429.20	U.S. dollars	—

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

SYDNEY — Strong local and foreign demand for blue-chip stocks boosted the market to a post-crash high. The All Ordinaries index rose 13.4 to 1,657.3.

TOKYO — No strong buying incentives jolted a market caught up in listless holiday trade. The Nikkei index fell 82.76 to 28,170.36.

HONG KONG — Prices were lower on falls in Tokyo and concern at the prospect of higher interest rates. The Hang Seng index lost 25.06 to 2,634.04.

SINGAPORE — Market closed for national day.

BOMBAY — Prices fell further on renewed profit-taking. Dealers said a two-for-five bonus share decision at Tata Tea Ltd fell below expectations.

FRANKFURT — Dealers remained dubious about future interest and exchange rate trends and prices were slightly lower in lacklustre trading. The 60-share Commerzbank index, calculated at mid-session, was down 9.1 at 1,501.3.

ZURICH — Prices were slightly lower in narrow trading at Wall Street's overnight fall and the weaker dollar. The All Swiss index lost 2.3 to 907.5.

PARIS — Shares shed midday gains after the rise in U.S. interest rates and ended easier. The 30-share bourse indicator declined by 0.07 per cent.

LONDON — Prices fell sharply on news of a rise in the U.S. Federal Reserve's discount rate. Dealers said it raised speculation about other central banks raising their rates. At 4:19 PM the FTSE 100 share index was down 7.8 at 1,868.2.

NEW YORK — Stock prices fell on the 1/2 point increase in the Federal Reserve's discount rate. The Dow lost 24 to 2,083.

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2- A VARIETY ARTISTIC SHOW AND DANCING

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Performances 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

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Burmese demand end to repression

BANGKOK (Agencies) — Burmese people staged a massive show of "people power" in Rangoon Tuesday demanding an end to 26 years of repressive rule.

Diplomats said hundreds of thousands of people marched through the streets, defying shots and threats from the security forces, who rounded up truckloads of detainees.

Diplomats said the military had gone on the offensive and were shooting demonstrators in some places.

They said there were reports of more than 100 casualties from gunfire, including some dead but there was no official confirmation.

The state-owned Radio Rangoon said security forces dispersed anti-government demonstrators who hurled missiles and destroyed traffic lights in Burma's capital early Tuesday, arresting more than 800 people and wounding four persons.

A number of foreign missions, including the U.S. embassy, closed their doors Tuesday and Burmese consulates in Bangkok and Hong Kong stopped issuing entry visas to tourists.

"The city is paralysed. Nothing is moving," one diplomat said when contacted by telephone at his home.

Like many other residents,

most diplomats were staying at home as the crowds swirled round the city streets, with truckloads of security forces swooping on protesters.

A Reuters correspondent said he was unable to make his way to his office as troops had opened fire when masked youths rallied near the central telex office close by.

The demonstrations in Rangoon followed protests in the capital and 14 other cities Monday in which four people were killed, state-run Rangoon Radio said.

All schools throughout the country, a main source of opposition, were closed Monday and diplomats said office workers were sent home.

The only official report of shooting was made by Rangoon Radio, which said security forces fired 12-bore shotguns late Monday night to disperse a crowd outside the city hall in the heart of the British-built city centre.

Diplomats said the situation was utterly confused.

"We've had reports that there have been casualties, but that there are still people in the

streets," one of them said. "We have also had reports that there has been more shooting to disperse the crowds."

"But whether those shots were in the air or whether there have been further casualties, I don't know. I haven't seen anything with my own eyes. We aren't allowed to go out of the house today," he said.

The demonstrations, which according to officials also flared in 14 other Burmese towns Monday, are the largest show of anti-government protest since democracy was toppled in the South-east Asian nation in 1962.

Diplomats said most of the demonstrations in Rangoon have been concentrated around the Sule Pagoda and Maha Bandoa Square in the downtown area and the hilltop Shwedagon Pagoda in the northern suburbs.

The demonstrators have sung the national anthem, denounced Sein Lwin in speeches and shouted pro-democracy slogans as they marched past the U.S. embassy.

The student-led demonstrations were the culmination of six months of social and political turmoil that has shaken the tight grip the ruling military-led Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) has had since the 1962 military coup.



In keeping with their agreement to destroy intermediate range nuclear missiles, the Soviets have begun to destroy the SS 20 missiles on the

Kasputin Yar base in the Volgograd region (Sygma photo)

Soviet inspectors visit Belgian base

BRUSSELS (AP) — Two teams of 10 Soviet officials are to visit a cruise missile base and a missile repair shop Tuesday under the superpowers' Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty to remove hundreds of ground-launched medium-range nuclear missiles from Europe.

The 20 inspectors arrived Monday afternoon and spent the night in a Brussels hotel.

U.S. officials said they must state by nine a.m. (0700 GMT) Tuesday which team will inspect Florennes Air Base, 65 kilometres south of here, and which will check out a repair factory 15 kilometres north of Florennes.

The plant belongs to Sabca, a Belgian aviation construction company, which the United States uses as a repair and maintenance shop for its European-based cruise missiles.

Since March, 1985, the United States has deployed 20 cruise missiles at Florennes, including four spares. Officials said as of June 21, the latest date for which information was available, there were 55 missiles at the Sabca plant at Gosselies.

The Soviet inspectors, led by Viacheslav S. Lyubedev, arrived at 4.15 p.m. (1415 GMT) Monday at Aheleg airport here in a Tupolev-134 of the Soviet airline Aeroflot.

They were welcomed by U.S. air force Colonel John Fer, head of the U.S. On-Site Inspection Agency's European office at Rhein-Main air base in West Germany, his deputy, U.S. army Lieutenant Colonel Scott G. Lang, and Belgian officials.

Tuesday's inspections are part of the INF Treaty under which Washington and Moscow will remove all ground-launched

medium-range nuclear missiles with range of between 500 and 5,500 kilometres.

The treaty, Lyubedev told reporters upon his arrival, "marks the beginning of an unprecedented stage in the history of mankind... we will perform our duties in strict compliance with the provisions of the treaty." An interpreter translated his remarks from Russian into English and French.

Soviet inspectors have already visited U.S. missile sites and related installations in Britain, West Germany, The Netherlands and the United States. Italy is the only European nation Soviet inspectors have not yet visited.

U.S. inspectors have so far visited sites in the Soviet Union, East Germany and Czechoslovakia.

Belfast riots mark internment anniversary

BELFAST (R) — Sporadic rioting erupted Tuesday with police opening fire to disperse Irish nationalists marking the 17th anniversary of Britain's internment without trial of guerrilla suspects in Northern Ireland, a policy abandoned in 1975.

Army and police patrols were under constant pressure and attack all night in Belfast, shot at and bombarded with petrol bombs, grenades and rocks, police said.

Several people were injured or arrested.

Cars were hijacked and set alight to make street barricades, a Protestant Baptist church was attacked by arsonists, a bus depot was stormed by rioters and a policeman slightly injured when a car raced through a roadblock.

Tension is traditionally high in Belfast when Irish nationalists mark the introduction of internment, dropped after Britain faced a storm of international protest over the arrest of 2,000 suspects.

Bonfires were lit across Belfast Tuesday and people rattled their dustbin lids on the ground, echoing the warning given to suspects in 1971 so they could hide before British troops burst into their houses.

Unionist politicians representing Northern Ireland's one-million strong Protestant majority called for a return to internment after an upsurge in attacks by the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which is fighting to end the territory's links with Britain.

Britain welcomes its newest princess

LONDON (R) — Britain has welcomed the birth of its newest princess, the duke and duchess of York's first child, who came into the world on what many believe to be the luckiest day of the century. She was born at 8:18 p.m. on the eighth day of the eighth month of 1988, a date which according to Chinese superstition is the luckiest of the century. On a day when international news was dominated by announcement of a ceasefire date in the Gulf war, Britain's popular newspapers carried the banner headline "It's a Girl." The Duke of York, Prince Andrew, who is Queen Elizabeth's second son, waved at the cheering crowd as he drove from London's Portland hospital after attending the birth Monday night of his 3.06-kilogramme daughter. Crowds pressed against Buckingham palace's railings to read an official birth notice announcing that mother and baby were well.

Butcher slaughters price inspector

PEKING (R) — A butcher in Nanchang, southeast China, has been executed for murdering a price inspector with a meat knife, the People's Daily said Tuesday. Inspector Chen Lianqing caught Yang Xiangou selling pork at an illegally high price in a city market late last month and demanded a fine, the paper said. Yang paid but then suddenly attacked Chen and another inspector with his cleaver. Yang was shot Monday after an appeal against execution failed, it said.

Oldest person lives in Cuba

HAVANA (R) — The world's oldest living person is a Cuban lady who will turn 117 this month, the Cuban daily newspaper Tribuna said. Luisa Heredia Ruano was born August 25, 1871, from a black slave mother, it said. She gave birth to only one child, a daughter, but now has nine grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren for a total of 42 descendants, including 14 from a fourth generation and three from a fifth.

Wedding boom on 8-8-88

LAS VEGAS (R) — This gambling city had a mini-wedding boom Monday, the eighth day of the eighth month of 1988, because many people regard eight as a lucky number. "We have 65 weddings booked for today instead of the usual Monday total of 25," Gordon Gust, owner of the Candlelight wedding chapel, which specialises in quick weddings, said. "Some couples want to be married at 8:00 a.m. others at 8:00 p.m. and others insist their ceremony must take exactly eight minutes," he said. "Eight minutes is pretty fast for a wedding ceremony." Gust added, Kathy Brown, wedding director of the Little Chapel of the West, said her chapel usually has five or six weddings on a Monday. "Today, we will be performing 46 weddings," she said.

Relaxing saves plunging skydiver

DARWIN, Australia (R) — A skydiver plunged more than three kilometres Monday after his two parachutes failed to open, and saved his life by relaxing. "When I went through the treetops I just relaxed my whole body. That was it," the 34-year-old Greg Wright said from his hospital bed Tuesday. Wright, 34, told reporters both the main and reserve parachutes failed soon after he made the jump from a Cessna aircraft with 14 others. "I bounced and bounced. I guess my number just wasn't up," he said.

Sheen's stand-in enjoys attention

MILWAUKEE, Wisconsin (AP) — Ramon, Guzman's summer job has him spending his nights meeting celebrities, signing autographs and even entertaining marriage proposals from adoring female fans. Guzman, a senior this fall at Ripon College, is serving as actor Charlie Sheen's stand-in and double in the baseball movie "Major League," which is being filmed at Milwaukee County Stadium this summer. "It's weird, because people are coming up to me asking for my autograph, even after I tell them I'm not Charlie," said Guzman, whose build and face resemble the 33-year-old movie star. "They say, 'Oh, you know you're just his stand-in, but we want your autograph anyway,'" Guzman said.

Shultz says attack will not intimidate U.S. or Bolivia

LA PAZ (R) — Secretary of State George Shultz vowed that a bomb attack on his motorcade will not intimidate the United States or Bolivia in their fight against drug traffickers.

"We will not be intimidated and the Bolivian government will not be intimidated," Shultz said at a press conference after the attack Monday.

No one was injured but four motorcade cars were damaged when the remote-controlled dynamite bomb blew up near the road moments after Shultz passed.

Shultz continued his scheduled meetings with Bolivia's top leaders on cooperation against drug trafficking and other issues.

Some Bolivian officials think the explosives, which were

evidently too weak to kill Shultz, were set off by drug traffickers in an effort to intimidate the Secretary of State and Bolivian officials.

In an anonymous call to a local radio station, a person said the attack had been carried out by a group calling itself the "Simon Bolivar command."

The radio gave no further details and there was no immediate information about the group whose name would derive from a 19th century hero of Latin America's independence wars against Spain.

Shultz did not accuse a specific group.

Bolivia is the world's second largest producer of cocaine after Peru. The Bolivian government, with Washington's strong back-

ing, has embarked on an anti-drug drive.

It is eradicating areas where coca, the leaf from which cocaine is derived, is grown. It also has imposed stiffer penalties on drug traffickers and last month arrested coca kingpin Roberto Suarez.

The bomb went off at 14:25 GMT Monday as Shultz's 11-car motorcade entered downtown La Paz. Dust and debris were flung into cars and smoke billowed into the air. Four cars were damaged, including one in which Shultz's wife, Helena, was riding.

One of its windows was shattered, but an interior layer of bullet-proof glass protected her. In Quito, Ecuadorian Interior Minister Heinz Moeller said Shultz apparently suffered from bruises when a bomb exploded near his motorcade in Bolivia Monday.

Once the blast went off, Shultz's security men ordered the motorcade's destination changed from a downtown hotel to the U.S. embassy. Bodyguards rushed Shultz into the building. Police cordoned off a central square housing the presidential palace and the foreign ministry, while sniffer dogs checked for explosives in government offices to be visited by Shultz.

Before the attack, an unidentified assailant hurled a stick of dynamite at the U.S. embassy's commissary in suburban La Paz, blowing out some windows but causing no injuries, a spokesman said. It was uncertain whether the incidents were related.

LONDON (R) — Thousands of people have been unlawfully killed, tortured and detained by Indian police and security forces, Amnesty International charged Wednesday.

The London-based human rights group, in a report on India's human rights record since August 1987, said the violations had occurred because legal safeguards had been altered and national and state security forces were operating with impunity.

"There is a serious danger of innocent individuals falling victims to the widely defined powers which the government has given to members of the security forces

under special laws to arrest, detain and shoot to kill if such powers are used arbitrarily," it said.

Amnesty called on the government to abolish the death penalty, restore legal safeguards and set up independent investigations of all cases of death in custody, unlawful killings and torture.

It said it had submitted the report to Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in June but had received no reply.

A spokesman for the Indian Home Ministry in Delhi indicated that the allegations were a matter for the courts and said: "The

India police arrest 150 Tamil militants

MADRAS, India (R) — Police arrested 150 Sri Lankan militants in south India Monday less than a week after Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi said his government was getting "a little tired" of negotiating peace with them.

The crackdown of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) came after the guerrilla group responded to Gandhi's remarks by accusing him of making "baseless and irresponsible" statements.

Police said 67 LTTE members were arrested in Madras, capital of south India's Tamil Nadu

state, and 83 in nearby Madurai district.

The LTTE said in a statement that some of its members had been arrested in hospital but gave no further details.

Most of the LTTE's senior leaders are already under virtual house arrest. The militants said.

Gandhi, on a visit to Tamil Nadu last week, said the Indian government was growing tired of negotiating with the LTTE, the most powerful group fighting for an independent homeland for Sri Lanka's minority Tamils.

Astronomers take dim view of Eiffel satellite

By Sarah Raper

PARIS — To mark the centennial of the Eiffel Tower, France's best-known symbol, the City of Light has planned a daring and dramatic display of space technology — an orbiting string of luminous balloons that will appear as large as the full moon when seen from Earth.

"In 1989 the Eiffel Tower will be 100 years old, and the question was what would be a proper tribute," says Philippe Gillieron, a spokesman for the Eiffel Tower Management Company, sponsor of the project.

"Gustave Eiffel was responding to the challenge and the great adventure of his time — how to erect the tallest structure of his day. His design was for 300 metres, almost 1,000 feet," he says. "Now the same challenge resurfaces, and this time the frontier is obviously space."

Eiffel, an engineer with a passion for building bridges, designed the tower for the Paris Exhibition in 1889, defying sceptical opponents.

The centennial project has captured the imagination of French and aroused the indignation of astronomers. They fear the space sculpture will damage highly light-sensitive detecting instruments and make observations already hindered by moon and natural celestial objects such as the moon even

more difficult.

"There are a couple of aspects that are troubling about the project," says David L. Crawford, an astronomer at Kitt Peak National Observatory in Tucson, Arizona. "It is bright, and chances are it will wipe out the detectors. And basically it's advertising. The next thing we'll see is the McDonald's arches, and that's the wrong kind of thing to put in the sky."

The project began in 1986 as a nationwide design competition, with entries submitted by celebrated space engineers and French schoolchildren.

The winner was a "light ring" designed by a six-member team that included the chief researcher at France's National Centre for Scientific Research, Jean-Pierre Pommerehne, and architects who had previously designed a prize-winning space station.

The efforts of French teenagers at the College of Notre Dame de Tilloy in Compiègne did not go unnoticed. Their design was given an honourable mention by the jury, which included representatives from a number of European space agencies.

The light ring consists of an inflatable ring about 15 miles in circumference dotted with 100 reflective balloons made of mylar.

"The ring corresponded to the requirements of the contest — to invent an object visible from most of the world that would be symbolic of universal communications in the 20th century," says Gillieron.

The balloons, each with a diameter of almost 20 feet, would reflect sunlight in much the same way as the moon and would, according to the designers' calculations, shine among the 21 brightest stars seen from Earth.

The entire sculpture would appear as a brightly lit doughnut 500 miles above the Earth. The designers say the uninfated light ring would be stuffed

into a container and launched into space, where the container would explode, inflating the ring. Three years later it would self-destruct, they say. The cost of the project, including the launch, is set at \$40 million.

The Eiffel Tower Company is racing to find corporate sponsors for the feasibility and environmental-impact studies needed to carry out the project. The company hopes to complete the studies by the time the tower turns 100 in 1989, although the light ring would

not be launched until 1990 or 1991.

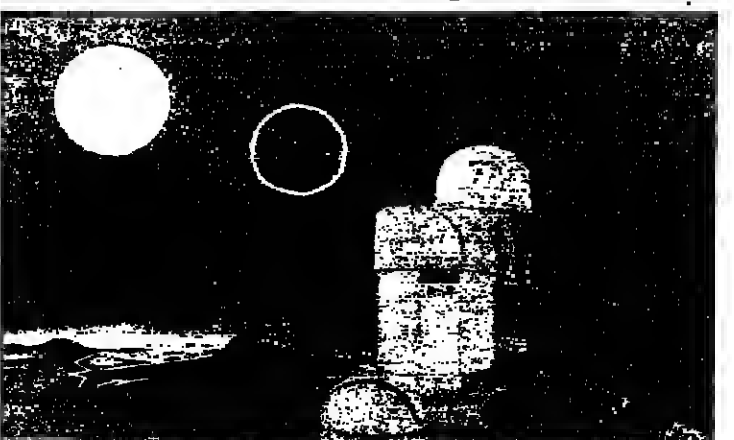
Meanwhile, the debate among astronomers threatens support for the project, even among groups that participated in the initial contest. A spokeswoman for the European Space Agency said the organisation had dissociated itself from the plan. The French National Centre for Space Studies is awaiting completion of the studies, says Gillieron.

Crawford is organising an international colloquium for astronomers on "Light Pollution, Radio Interference, and Other Space Debris." He says it's time for astronomers to focus on the hazards of projects such as the light ring and a Florida company's plan to launch an orbiting mausoleum for cremated bodies.

Other astronomers have written directly to the Eiffel Tower managers to complain. Professor Helene Dickel of the University of Illinois at Urbana has circulated a petition protesting the light ring.

"At the moment, we're realising there's suddenly a problem, and we should do something before it's too late," Dickel says, bemoaning astronomers' failures to stop much of the light pollution that hampers their work. "The mountaintops are not dark any more."

— National Geographic News Service.



Artist's concept, publicists' dream, astronomers' nightmare: Orbiting doughnut of 100 luminous balloons celebrates the 1989 centennial of Paris' Eiffel Tower. The French plan to launch the huge ring of balloons has angered astronomers worldwide. Here, as one example of the feared effect, the bright satellite bores between a full moon and Kitt Peak Observatory in Arizona, adding to the light interference already arising from nearby Tucson (National Geographic drawing).